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## THE HOMESTEAD STRIKE.

SUFFICIENT time has elapsed since this famous contest to permit of a somewhat dispassionate view of the principles at issue,—principles that will continue to greatly affect the labor movement. The attempt here made to present the causes and some of the results of the Homestead strike will be based upon the official investigations of the United States House of Representatives<sup>1</sup> and of the Senate,<sup>2</sup> as well as other fresh material believed to be reliable. Where not otherwise stated the facts presented are taken from the above sworn testimony.

On the one side was the Carnegie Steel Company, Limited, organized under the partnership law of Pennsylvania as a partnership, not as a stock company. On the other side was the National Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers of the United States. The former, employing about 13,000 men in various steel and coke works in and near Pittsburgh, is by far the largest manufacturer of steel rails in the country, while that part of the plant located at Homestead, a city of about 10,000 inhabitants,<sup>3</sup> a few miles above Pittsburgh, on the Monongahela, has the best equipment in the United States, if not in the world, for the manufacture of the structural steel now so largely used for bridges and fire-proof buildings. That part of the Homestead plant devoted to the manufacture of armor plate is also probably unexcelled, even by its great rival at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

The capital of the company is \$25,000,000, and Mr. Frick estimates the value of the Homestead plant, aside from the forty acres of land, at between \$5,000,000 and \$6,000,000. There is no hesitation, among such large dealers in steel as the writer has

<sup>1</sup> LII. Congress. *2nd Session, Report, No. 2,447.*

<sup>2</sup> LII. Congress. *2nd Session, Report, No. 1,280.*

<sup>3</sup> In 1890 the foreign born were 31 per cent. and those of foreign parentage 62 per cent. of the 7,911 population.

been able to meet, in placing the profits of this company during each of the last few years before the strike, among the millions of dollars, while many competitors, with inferior equipment and management, are being forced to the wall.

On the other side was the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers of about 24,000 members, with 292 lodges in the eight districts of the territory lying between Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis, and Birmingham, Alabama. In this territory there are supposed to be, according to the secretary of the union, about 35,000 skilled iron and steel workers, two thirds being American born. Four dollars a week strike-benefit is usually paid by the association, beginning with the fourth week of a strike. A reserve of \$25,000 is usually maintained. There are no other benefits payable from the treasury of the national council, such as for the sick and the unemployed, although the practice of paying such benefits exists in other American unions of equal age, and has been steadily increasing.

The National Amalgamated Association was formed in 1876 from a union of three organizations connected with different branches of iron and steel manufacture. One of these, the Sons of Vulcan, introduced in America in 1865 the idea of the sliding scale of wages, according to the selling price of the product, an idea worked out with much success by the Amalgamated Association.<sup>1</sup> The members do not refuse to work with non-union men. They are usually able to adjust their scales of wages and other matters through committees of conference that are appointed in each district or mill to meet the employers. The fondness of the men for their union is partially explained by the statement of the vice-president of a Philadelphia steel company:<sup>2</sup> "In the western part of Pennsylvania, in fact the whole of Pennsylvania west of the Allegheny, the wages of the workers in iron and steel mills have been excessively high, and such

<sup>1</sup>See an article on "Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers," by CARROLL D. WRIGHT, in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, July 1893.

<sup>2</sup>A. F. Huston, of the Lukens Iron and Steel Company, in the *Boston Herald*, July 28, 1892.

labor in Pittsburgh and vicinity commands higher wages than in any place east of it. The reason for this is that the Amalgamated Association is stronger in the western part of Pennsylvania than anywhere else."

Only once in twenty-six years of personal management has Mr. Carnegie, in a single one of his works, had any stoppage from strike or lockout, but when difficulties were likely to arise, he had shown a disposition to "sit down and wait" till an agreement could be reached rather than to call in new men.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Frick, however, who was one of the Carnegie company for some time before 1892, but only became chairman and manager in April of that year, testified before the House investigating committee<sup>2</sup> that, in 1889, the company was not intending to make as good terms as it did with the men, but the latter frightened off a posse of one hundred deputies collected by the sheriff. Thereupon one hundred and twenty Pinkertons were engaged, but before their arrival the then manager, fearful of destruction of property, made terms with the employees.

Mr. Frick, himself, had, prior to 1892, been involved in serious strikes in the coke regions, where he had gained a reputation for hostility to labor organizations, while he testifies that the latter,

<sup>1</sup> In 1886, he wrote in the *Forum*: "I would have the public give due consideration to the terrible temptation to which the workingman on a strike is sometimes subjected. To expect that one dependent on his daily wage for the necessities of life will stand by peaceably, and see a new man employed in his stead is to expect much. This poor man may have a wife and children dependent upon his labor. Whether medicine for a sick child, or even nourishing food for a delicate wife, is procurable, depends upon his steady employment. In all but a very few departments of labor, it is unnecessary and, I think, improper to subject men to such an ordeal. In the case of railways, and a few other employments, it is, of course, essential for the public wants that no interruption occur, and in such case, substitutes must be employed; but the employer of labor will find it much more to his interest, wherever possible, to allow his works to remain idle, and await the result of a dispute than to employ the class of men that can be induced to take the place of other men who have stopped work. Neither the best men as men, nor the best men as workers, are thus to be obtained. There is an unwritten law among the best workmen, 'Thou shalt not take thy neighbor's job.' No wise employer will lightly lose his old employés. Length of service counts for much in many ways. Calling upon strange men should be the last resort."

<sup>2</sup> *House Report*, p. 31.

largely composed in the coke regions of ignorant immigrants, had once broken their agreements to abide by decisions of arbitrators. It must be remarked that no such charge, so far as I have been informed, was made against the Amalgamated Association, save that, out of sympathy with the locked-out men in Homestead, certain men in other parts of the mills, who had just signed agreements for a year, joined the ranks of the strikers, when, on July 6th, the company refused to arbitrate or confer with the Amalgamated Association. Such uniting of interest among various branches of business of the same company, when there is trouble in one branch, is not admitted by most unions to be wrong. For instance, in the building trades of Chicago, it is expressly stipulated in the yearly agreements between the employers and employees that sympathetic strikes shall not be considered a violation of the agreement.

The year 1892 opened with two of the Carnegie plants manned by non-union men, the Edgar Thompson at Braddock, where the Knights of Labor had been defeated in 1888, and the Duquesne Steel works, bought in 1890. The Carnegie plants at Homestead, and the other plants employing men affiliated with the Amalgamated Association, had contracts expiring in June and July. This had been the unvarying practice of the Association, in iron and steel mills, since its beginning in 1876, except in the case of the steel rail works at South Chicago, to be explained later.

The relations at Homestead between employers and men seemed friendly, and the latter had \$140,000 on deposit with the company at six per cent., while sixty-nine workers had borrowed \$42,796.75 at six per cent., or an average of \$620 each, with which to pay for homes. No foreclosure had ever occurred. Most of the skilled labor was American, and fully two-thirds of the unskilled labor was of foreign birth.

Vitally important, and fatal to the men, as the next few months were to reveal, was the fact that of the 2,000 men eligible to membership in the Amalgamated Association, less than 400 had seen fit to join and husband strength for a wages contest.

Vice-President Carney of the Association says he saw the danger when in the spring Mr. Frick assumed control, but it was then too late to get more than about 800 into the union prior to July. The men thus went into the contest unprepared.

We come now to the questions at issue. Early in 1892 the firm asked the men to present their propositions for the year beginning July 1. This was soon done. A moderate advance in wages was asked. Within about two weeks Mr. John A. Potter, superintendent of the Homestead works, disappointed the committee by not conferring sufficiently with them. He presented a scale drawn up by the company, and told the men that they must get full authority to conclude an agreement before continuing the negotiations. This authority was soon obtained and the company was notified of that fact several weeks before June.

"Moreover, I told them," testified William T. Roberts of the employees' committee,<sup>1</sup> "you can tell your people we are willing to make any reductions where they can show any reductions are necessary. We want to settle it without trouble; don't want a strike."

Nothing more was heard from the company until May 29, but during April and May a high fence, pierced with holes and surmounted with barbed wire, was completed about the grounds. The report that the wire could be charged with electricity is disproved by the lack of insulation. Gratings were put in the large sewers leading from the grounds, search lights were placed in position, and everything betokened preparation for war, or defense against attack.

On May 30 came an ultimatum from Mr. Frick presenting his terms for the future, and requesting a decision thereon not later than June 24, 1892. The letter, directed to Superintendent Potter, is as follows<sup>2</sup>:

DEAR SIR: Referring to my visit to the works this morning—I now hand you herewith Homestead Steel Works wages scales for the open hearth plants, and No. 32 and 119 inch mills, which you will

<sup>1</sup> *Senate Report*, p. 205.

<sup>2</sup> *House Report*, p. 23.

please present immediately to the joint-committee, with the request that its decision be given thereon not later than June 24, 1892.

These scales have had most careful consideration, with a desire to act toward our employés in the most liberal manner. A number of rates have been advanced upon your recommendation, and the wages which will be earned thereunder are considerably in advance of those received by the employés of any of our competitors in the same lines. You can say to the committee that these scales are in all respects the most liberal that can be offered. We do not care whether a man belongs to a union or not, nor do we wish to interfere. He may belong to as many unions or organizations as he chooses, but we think our employés at Homestead Steel Works would fare much better working under the system in vogue at Edgar Thompson and Duquesne.

Yours truly,

H. C. FRICK, *Chairman*.

What followed is thus told by Mr. Roberts<sup>1</sup>: "There was also a letter from Mr. Frick, stating his object in sending it, and he stated that 'Unless this scale is accepted by the 24th of June, we intend to deal with our men individually,' I turned back to the office, and I says to Mr. Potter, 'do you think this is fair; do you think this is giving us a chance to talk the matter over?' I says, 'you people, when I was here last, told me if I would come back with power to make a scale, that you were willing to enter into negotiations and try and arrange the thing in an amicable manner.' 'I cannot help it,' says he, 'it is Mr. Frick's ultimatum.' I says, 'John, I don't think that is a square deal, in getting our men to give me the privilege of making an arrangement with your people.' That simply cut off all conference with the Carnegie firm. We had no more chances to confer with them. I left the mill on the 30th of May. I worked on the 30th. I went to the convention after that, and I left my address so the superintendent of our department (who claimed that he was satisfied in his mind that we would have a conference with the firm) could telephone me to come home at a moment's notice. The notice never came, and on the 23d of June we sought a

<sup>1</sup> *Senate Report*, p. 206.

conference with the firm, which lasted but a few minutes. We didn't do much with them."

Mr. Frick was not closely questioned on this point, but stated that prior to June 24th: "Our men have never asked for a conference that we did not willingly agree to."<sup>1</sup>

Early in June the usual annual convention of the Amalgamated Association was held. As to this, the then president, William Weihe, testified:<sup>2</sup> 'The object and motive of the Association has been for years to get the cost of labor as nearly uniform as possible, where the work is similar. By having the various representatives from various iron and steel works together in one body you can get an expression of the price paid, and everybody agree upon a price for each mill that comes as near as possible to the same cost, so as not to have any disadvantage, or give any manufacturer an advantage unless he has improved machinery. The Association never objects to improvements. If there are improvements that do away with certain jobs they make no objection. They believe in the American idea that the genius of the country should not be retarded.'

At this convention it was voted to refer the negotiations with the Carnegie Company to the conference committee of the members of the Association at Homestead. Soon after this, contracts with the Amalgamated Association as to wages and labor conditions for the ensuing three years, to end June 30, 1895, were made by the company in the Upper and the Lower Mills at Pittsburgh, and at Beaver Falls. On June 20th and 22nd similar contracts were made in eight of the twelve departments at Homestead. In only four departments, employing about 900 men, and embracing only about 325 men whose wages it was proposed to reduce, was there any disagreement. With regard to these men the company, apparently without much explanation of the reasons therefor, made three demands, to be conceded by June 24th, as follows:<sup>3</sup>

1. Wages were to be governed by the price of Bessemer steel

<sup>1</sup> *Senate Report*, p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> *Senate Report*, p. 195.

<sup>3</sup> *House Report*, p. 19-20.



billets as before, but with \$22 as the minimum instead of \$25 as in the three-years' agreement of July 1, 1891, to June 30, 1892.

2. There was to be a further reduction, averaging about 15 per cent. in the piece or tonnage rates of wages.

3. The contract was to expire December 31, 1893, instead of June 30th.

Steel billets, of which the Carnegie plants made about 12 per cent. of the total American output, sold on July 1, 1889, at \$27, and were taken at \$26.50 as the basis of the scale then entered upon. Later they rose for a short time to \$36, and fell to \$25 in January, 1892, and to \$22.50 on June 10th, rising to \$23.75 on June 24th, possibly because of the imminence of the lockout. The price of steel beams had fallen 39 per cent. from July 1, 1889 to July 1, 1892. In view of the subsequent fall in billets, until in February, 1894, they were quoted at \$15.50, and early in May at \$16.25, the men would have been wise to have accepted the proposition of the company. But few anticipated such a fall at that time. When the men had their final meeting with the company on June 23rd they offered to take \$24, and although Mr. Frick says he soon left the room, believing the committee of the men too large for conference, he was induced by Superintendent Potter to send word to the committee room that the minimum could be raised to \$23. The consequent reduction in wages from \$25 as a minimum would have been 8 per cent. Doubtless the wage-workers, in seeking to keep up the minimum, were influenced by the common trades-union conception, emphasized in the recent English coal-strike, that wages should control prices much more than prices should control wages.

The second demand of the company, for a reduction in tonnage rates, was based on the idea that, owing to new machinery introduced since 1889 and other machinery to be put in later, the men could produce more than before, and as long as, despite reductions in piece wages, they still secured as much per day as in other mills, they could not complain. The output in May, 1892, exceeded the monthly average of August to December, 1889 inclusive, by 17.5 per cent. in the open hearth mills, 20.6

per cent. in the 32-inch slabbing mill, and 52.3 per cent. in the 119-inch plate mill. The men held that the output in May was abnormal and that for a longer period, say January 1st to July 1, 1892, it had not exceeded the output of 1889 by nearly as large a percentage as that above given. The men also claimed that the new machinery helped the employer by reducing the necessary number of workers per ton. By increasing somewhat the output and lessening the delays in passing from one process to another, the new machinery, it was said, exacted from the men more rapid and exhausting labor. The contest was partly as to who should gain by the improvements, capitalist or wage-worker, in a business where, through combination, patents, secret processes and the tariff, the consumer might expect some time to elapse before securing all of his share in the benefits of increased efficiency. Superintendent Potter testified<sup>1</sup> that one of the four mills in the contest, the 32-inch slabbing mill, had no competitors, and the 119-inch plate mill, with the help of the former, would produce fifty per cent. more than any other mill with fifty per cent. less labor. General Walker urges the benefit to society of the wage-worker's striving through organization to get as much of the benefit of improvements in machinery and processes as possible without crippling capital.<sup>2</sup>

Whether the retention by the men of their old tonnage wages

<sup>1</sup> *House Report*, p. 126.

<sup>2</sup> "That, in any extensive community, where the factory and workshop system is highly developed, embracing large bodies of laborers of both sexes, of all ages except the very youngest, and of widely varying orders of skill, intelligence, forethought, and self-restraint, it is desirable, if not indeed essential, in order to secure the community against grave evils, that the power of resistance, on the part of individuals, to a reduction of wages, or an increase of the hours of work, or to other unwelcome requirements of the master class, should be strengthened in some way or other from the outside, is now admitted by nearly all publicists and economists. . . . It is felt that it is alike for the interest of the laborer and of the general community, and even, if rightly viewed, of the employer himself, that the laborer should perform a real part in fixing the rate of wages and other conditions of employment; that his actions should not, by his necessities and his urgent fear of losing employment, be limited to merely taking what is offered him; but that he should be able virtually to dispute the ground with the employer, in the case of a threatened reduction, if not also of a desired advance; that he should be able to carry on that debate so strenuously and so long as to put the employer under

would have materially interfered with the development of the steel industry at Homestead is a question whose decision may seem to some to demand more data than are yet at hand. Certain it is, however, that all the officials of the Amalgamated Association testified to its being the custom of the Association to make large allowance for improved machinery in determining what are fair wages per ton.<sup>1</sup>

Much has been said about the high wages of the skilled workers at Homestead. Wages of \$25 a day, and the custom of workmen riding to their work in a fine carriage, are typical fictions. Mr. Frick testified to the pay roll for May, 1892, in the four mills under discussion. Four men received from \$10 to \$12.65 a day for about twenty-three days' labor. Twelve received from \$8 to \$10, thirty from \$6 to \$8, eighty-two from \$4 to \$6, four hundred and forty-three from \$2 to \$4, and three hundred and thirty-five under \$2, mostly \$1.40. The mechanics and common laborers worked ten hours a day, and the three hundred and twenty-five highly skilled steel makers worked eight hours a day. No reduction in wages was to be made for those getting under \$2. About equal numbers of those receiving from \$2 to \$4 were to have their wages reduced, as well as nearly all those getting over \$4.

The workmen, on the other hand, testified that the output, and therefore the wages, had been abnormally large in May, 1892, and that the average daily wages during the twenty-two and six-tenths days per month worked in the twenty-three months by the four men mentioned above as getting from \$10 to \$12.65 was only \$7.60 for three, and \$7.04 for the fourth, and for the twenty-three getting \$8 to \$10, in May the normal average was \$5.40 to \$7.04 according to position, and the normal average of those getting \$6 to \$8 in May was \$4.19 to \$5.96. Of all the three thousand eight hundred employees, only one hundred and a strong, a very strong, inducement to yield the point, if it can be done without injury to his business or impairment of his capital. . . . It is for the general welfare that the resistance to reductions of wages should be firm and persistent, only yielding to an absolute industrial necessity."—*New Princeton Review*, September, 1888.

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, the testimony of President Weihe, cited above.

thirteen, it was claimed by the workers, had averaged during the twenty-three months ending June 1, 1892, from \$4 to \$7.50; one thousand one hundred and seventy-seven from \$1.68 to \$2.50 per day, and one thousand six hundred and twenty-five 14 cents an hour or less.<sup>1</sup> Even these wages of the skilled laborers are good, but the men could not see why wages should be cut 15 per cent. on tonnage, and 8 per cent. on the scale, when the profits of the employers were commonly supposed, even among rival employers, to be very much above the average of manufacturing business. To intercept in wages some of the benefits of improved machinery and, through restriction of the supply of labor, to keep day wages, and even task wages or earnings per unit of exertion a little above those paid in rival mills, seem to have been the objects of the employees.

The third demand of the company was for the expiration of the wage contract December 31st, instead of June 30th. It was claimed that the company had to make contracts with customers in January and needed to know what wages were to be paid throughout the time of filling the contracts. To this the men replied by offering to contract for three or four or five years following June 30th, but claimed that the men would be at a disadvantage in December in bargaining with employers, since it then costs more to live. Employees on a strike could not support themselves so easily, while, since cold weather is pleasanter than warm for hot work in iron and steel, and since more are then idle in other occupations, there would be in December an abnormal competition for places, even at low wages. It was further claimed that no company connected with the Amalgamated Association, and that meant most of those west of Homestead, had their wage contracts expire in winter, save the steel rail mill in South Chicago, especially exempted by the Amalgamated Association in order to meet the competition of the non-union rail mill at Braddock.

On June 28th, 29th, and 30th, one part of the works after

<sup>1</sup> See *House Report*, pp. 184-5. Part of the figures in the text are not directly quoted, but are simple computations from the testimony.

another was closed by the company, until on July 1st the four mills or departments where the scale had not been signed, were entirely shut down.<sup>1</sup>

Then came the mistake of the men, according to many newspaper reports of the time, in chasing out of town or into hiding, any who seemed ready to take the strikers' places. The other departments at Homestead, even the unskilled and unorganized, struck out of sympathy with their locked-out brothers, and from the fear, as they testified, that if the wages were reduced and the union broken up among the others, their turn would come in time. On July 4th, while the 300 Pinkerton guards were preparing to leave Chicago and New York for the scene of excitement, the weak sheriff was for the first time summoned by the company. Visiting Homestead and obtaining from the strikers what he understood to be a promise of support, he the next day sent up a dozen deputies, who were induced by the display of force, though none was actually used,<sup>2</sup> to return to Pittsburgh. Meanwhile the works were carefully guarded from damage by the strikers. Even a leaky natural gas cock and main were repaired at the suggestion of the strikers. Such officers of the company as cared to enter the works seem to have been freely admitted,<sup>3</sup> while the general public was excluded, and the foremen through persuasion and threats, said Superintendent

<sup>1</sup> Speaking of the fateful 23rd of June, fully eight days after Mr. Frick had begun negotiations with the Pinkertons, and seven days before the expiration of the old contract, Mr. Weihe, president of the Amalgamated Association, for the nine years ending near the close of 1892, testified: "I believe if the company would have conceded to a conference again, and kept up negotiations until the first of July, there might have been a possibility of arriving at some settlement that would have been satisfactory to both parties. My experience has been in the past nine or ten years that very often when a conference took place in the beginning it looked as if no agreement could be reached, but when the day came upon which the scale expired, agreements were reached, and the work went on through conciliation. I believe, if the conference had been continued between the 23rd of June and the 1st of July, finally some settlement would have been reached that would have been satisfactory to both parties."—*Senate Report*, p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> *House Report*, p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> Superintendent Potter testified (*House Report*, p. 128) that he and his superintendents freely entered the mills on July 1st and 2nd, and on the afternoon of the 2nd he and some of his superintendents went to Pittsburgh.

Potter, were induced not to enter. Anything looking toward the introduction of new employees was so treated as to give good reason for supposing that, more perhaps through the action of the unskilled than of their leaders, but probably with the sympathy of the latter, any non-union man seeking to go to work in the mills would be in great danger of violence.<sup>1</sup>

In the early morning of July 6th the Pinkerton force was discovered coming up the river toward Homestead. Whistles were blown, guns were fired, very largely at least, high in the air, to arouse the people. Who fired the first shot at the opposite party may never be known. Captain Nordrum, who, as second officer, took command of the Pinkertons after the serious wounding of Captain Heinde, testified<sup>2</sup> that the men on shore called them Pinkertons, but Captain Heinde testified that the men on the boats were addressed as scabs, and that therefore the strikers thought they were fighting non-union men brought in to take their places.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>As a conservative editorial in the *Chicago Economist* states: "Each of the two classes has its vices. The capitalist uses his money to influence legislators and others in power; the laborer resorts to violence and intimidation." That violence, or threats of it, assist in winning many strikes, while a positive hindrance to success in others through the effect on public opinion, is evident. Violence and the threat of it seem to be a comparatively unimportant factor in most of the strikes in Great Britain, and to be at least a steadily diminishing factor in many American trades unions. In America, however, it is unfortunately true that the intimidation of those who might take the places of strikers does not stop with social ostracism, refusal to work by their side, and the application of offensive epithets such as "scab," "rat," and "blackleg." Any social class is wont to punish those it detests to that extent. But when men go beyond this, and use, or threaten to use physical force, government is bound to interfere. However great may seem to the strikers the provocation—and it has nowhere been better expressed than in Mr. Carnegie's words in the *Forum* above quoted—law and order must be preserved. A strong state force should have been at once collected at Homestead.

<sup>2</sup>*Senate Report*, p. 147.

<sup>3</sup>Mr. Hugh O'Donnell, who was elected chief of the strikers' advisory committee by the members of the Amalgamated Association, the Knights of Labor, and the still larger number of those belonging to no organization, writes what is probably the real fact: "The strikers thought that, as there were two barges, one contained scabs and the other their Pinkerton guard." He also says that a German among the Pinkertons told him after their surrender that he was an old iron worker, and that, like many others of the 300, he had been engaged to work in the mills. Probably the chiefs of the Pinkerton force would deny this latter point, which was not referred to in the official investigations.

Mr. O'Donnell also asserts that to avoid trouble an effort had been vainly made by the advisory committee to keep the people away from the river.

The sheriff of the county had placed a deputy on the barges, who was supposed by the guards to possess the authority and will to deputize them when necessary, but he never did so. When the firing on shore began, whether in the air or at the barges, the guards took out rifles that had accompanied them from Ohio, boxed as freight, and began firing at the shore.

The *Chicago Tribune*, July 8, gave a list of two Pinkertons and nine workmen dead, and a large number injured. One need not here dwell in detail on the grounds of the hesitation of Captain Nordrum and his men to fire into the crowd of men, women and children, and storm the works at great danger to both sides, though urged by Superintendent Potter, who was on one of the barges, to make another rally,<sup>1</sup> nor on the inhuman treatment of the disarmed Pinkertons by the women and the more brutal of the mob, while the members of the Amalgamated Association were trying to escort the prisoners to a safe place. The men were legally and morally wrong in resisting the entrance of guards upon the property of the company.<sup>2</sup>

On the day of the battle at Homestead, July 6, President

<sup>1</sup> *Senate Report*, p. 144.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. W. T. Roberts, one of the men, speaks as follows in explanation of what took place: "It is almost impossible to tell people that have never been in labor circles, just how the laboring man feels under certain conditions. Now, the men at Homestead were in a peculiar condition. The most of them at Homestead had started to build their own little homes. Some of them had them about half paid for under the conditions that existed prior to this time. They were allowed to enjoy the privilege of belonging to their association, and they also knew from experience that their organization was the only thing, in the first place, that enabled them to accumulate sufficient to build their homes, and, I suppose, in a great many cases people up there had started to build their homes, and probably had them about half paid for, and then to be denied the privilege of belonging to an organization that had done so much for them, as they thought, and, on the other hand, to be forced into accepting a reduction that they didn't think was right or just at that time, and then to be confronted with a gang of loafers and cut-throats from all over the country, coming there, as they thought, to take their jobs, why, they naturally wanted to go down and defend their homes and their property and their lives, with force, if necessary.—*Senate Report*, pp. 210–211.

Weihe of the Amalgamated Association, who had not been at Homestead on that day, tried to prevent further trouble. Mr. Frick said :<sup>1</sup>

“A leading ex-official<sup>2</sup> in the Amalgamated Association, yesterday, when this rioting was going on, called on the sheriff, and, I am informed, asked him to come down to see me, stating that if he could get a promise that we would confer with the representatives of the Amalgamated Association looking toward an adjustment of this trouble, that he would go to Homestead and try and stop the rioting.”

“Did you consider his proposal ?”

“No, sir. I told the gentleman who called that we would not confer with the Amalgamated Association officials. That it was their followers who were rioting and destroying our property, and we would not accept his proposition.<sup>3</sup> At the same time this representative of our former workmen said that they were willing to accept the terms offered, and concede everything we asked except the date of the termination of the scale, which they insisted should be June 30, in place of December 31.”

On July 10th, the militia were called out, after repeated requests by the sheriff, and failure to secure deputies. On the 11th, 7,000 troops arrived and remained about a month. One regiment staid much longer. On the 18th warrants were issued for the arrest of Hugh O'Donnell and two others for murder. The strike spread to other of the Carnegie works, both union and non-union, thus breaking the agreement just made for the coming year.

In this connection there are certain hitherto unpublished facts to be taken into account. On the first Sunday (July 17th) following the arrival of the militia at Homestead, two gentlemen, prominent in labor circles, came to Homestead and urged Mr. O'Donnell, chairman of the Advisory Committee, to go to New York and secure, if possible, the intercession of some prom-

<sup>1</sup> *House Report*, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Weihe did not become an “ex-official” until a little later, though his resignation, to take effect in a few weeks, had already been accepted.

<sup>3</sup> The only property destroyed seems to have been a small portion of the fence, torn down on the day of the Pinkerton battle.



inent man, for the purpose of inducing Mr. Carnegie to order Mr. Frick to re-open conference with the men. On the unanimous vote of the Advisory Committee, Mr. O'Donnell set out. On reaching New York and consulting with a few labor leaders it was decided to approach Mr. Whitelaw Reid, who as candidate for the Vice-Presidency on the Republican ticket was assumed to be interested in maintaining peace in a tariff-aided industry. In the office of one of the editors of the *New York Tribune* the letter given in the note below was dictated by Mr. O'Donnell, but dated from Homestead and dated back a couple days.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. O'Donnell states, as did President Weihe, on July 6th that there was "no disposition on the part of the employees to

1  
HOMESTEAD, PENN., July 16, 1892.  
HON. WHITELAW REID, New York, N. Y.

DEAR SIR :—I address you in behalf of the 12,000 inhabitants of Homestead, Pennsylvania. In their name I ask that you interest yourself in the unfortunate controversy still pending between them and the Carnegie Steel Company, by whom the majority of the adult population of the town is employed.

In presenting this matter to you I have no desire to dwell upon the merits or demerits of the conflict. I am looking toward the future, not the past. With the past I assume you are fairly well-informed; sufficiently well, at all events, to make it unnecessary for me to supplement your knowledge at this time. It would be foreign to my purpose to do so. I simply therefore lay before you the situation as it exists today.

A borough, not only one of the most prosperous in Pennsylvania but in the entire Union, whose population represents to the highest degree the thrift, industry, intelligence and morality—in short, the best tendencies of the American people, is at present practically under martial law. The entire State Militia, numbering 8,000 or more, are in control of the place at an expense to the commonwealth of \$22,000 a day. The spirit of peace and progress has been supplanted by one of intense bitterness and discontent. It is in the interests of no one that this state of affairs should continue; that it should not, there is but one, and only one, course to pursue. I say only one, and I speak advisedly. That course is an honorable settlement on the lines that I shall presently indicate.

But before submitting my proposition permit me to say a word in reference to the course of procedure which appears to be in the minds of the Carnegie Company. I mean their express determination to put non-union men at work in the places of our people by the aid of the State authorities. I am not going to discuss the question of the right of the Company to do so. I simply want to point out the practical effect of that action, which in my judgment may be briefly summed up in the statement that it will precipitate an unending internecine strife at Homestead. It must be borne in

stand upon a question of scale, or wages, or hours, or anything-else." All that was wanted was a "re-opening of the conference doors." \*

Mr. O'Donnell, having been charged by the Carnegie officials with murder in connection with the events of July 6th, hastened back to Homestead on the promise that Mr. Reid would cable Mr. Carnegie. Mr. O'Donnell surrendered to the authorities and was held in prison five days. Then (July 25th) he was released on \$10,000 bail. Meantime Mr. Reid, in response to

mind that a majority of the present employees own their own homes. All their interests centre there, and they will never surrender them without the most determined effort, and one that will be made regardless of all that can be said or done to the contrary. In brief, owing to the peculiar conditions of this strike which I have indicated here, the trouble will, in my judgment, only begin in earnest when the mills are set going by the men who will take the places of the old employees.

I am sure that you agree with me in saying that it is not desirable to have this come to pass. It is not desirable that the present situation should continue, nor is it desirable that the men who have by years of patient toil acquired a little homestead should be cut off from their employment if it can be prevented in any honorable way. It can be prevented easily and without the sacrifice of honor or dignity upon either side. How shall it be done? Simply let the Carnegie Company recognize the Amalgamated Association by re-opening the conference doors, and I have no hesitation in saying that when that is done the end of the strife is at hand. I am warranted in saying that there is no disposition on the part of the employees to stand upon a question of scale, or wages, or hours, or anything else. The spirit that dominates them is conciliatory in the extreme, for they deplore the recent sad occurrence as much as any other class of people in the whole country. I assure you that they will do all in their power to bring about a re-establishment of harmonious relations.

I ask you to interest yourself in this matter because I believe you are in a position to render more effective service than, perhaps, any other man in this country. I do not think that it is necessary for me to dwell upon this point, nor state the reasons why this is true. That it is true is sufficiently clear to my mind to cause me to ask you to do what you can in every honorable way to bring about an amicable settlement.

My appeal is not in the name of any political party, nor in the name of organized labor, but for the sake of the men, women and little children that make up our present distressed community.

Sincerely and respectfully yours,

HUGH O'DONNELL.

\* The information here given on this point is derived not only from Mr. O'Donnell, but also from very high and absolutely reliable authority entirely disconnected with the Carnegie Company or with organized labor. Inquiries addressed to the Carnegie Company have brought no reply.

Mr. O'Donnell's letter cited above, had applied to Mr. Frick for Mr. Carnegie's address in order to telegraph him—Mr. Carnegie being at that time absent in Scotland and his address not being known to any one in this country except his business associates. Mr. Frick refused to give the address; whereupon Mr. Reid obtained it from our Consul General in London, John C. New, and then cabled Mr. Carnegie, urging a speedy and amicable settlement. An answer was received by cable from Mr. Carnegie, in which he accepted the terms proposed by Mr. O'Donnell and urged that Mr. Frick be seen immediately with a view to effecting the settlement.<sup>1</sup>

By this time the New York anarchist, Alexander Berkman, without the knowledge or countenance of the strikers, had made his attempt on Mr. Frick's life (July 23), so that when the gentleman who undertook the mission of reconciliation reached Mr. Frick he found him confined to his bed with the injuries he had sustained. My informant (whose name is withheld) goes on to say: "Mr. Frick was obdurate. He refused to consider the matter at all, denounced the strikers as assassins and declared that if Carnegie came in person, in company with President Harrison and entire cabinet, he would not settle the strike."<sup>2</sup>

Mr. O'Donnell writes: "Thus it would seem that the bullet from Berkman's pistol, failing in its foul intent, went straight through the heart of the Homestead strike."<sup>3</sup> Disclaiming the idea of having intended to make political capital out of the New York trip he asserts the purity of his motives.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Copies of these cablegrams can not now be obtained.

<sup>2</sup> My informant adds: "There is a well-defined rumor that since Mr. Carnegie's return he has written Mr. Reid expressing regret that Mr. Frick did not agree to O'Donnell's proposition as forwarded to Mr. Reid."

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Frick's previous refusal, July 7th, to confer with President Weihe and the strikers, as well as his refusal to give Mr. Carnegie's address to the editor of the New York *Tribune*, throws some doubt on the probability of Mr. Carnegie's order being followed, even if Berkman had not made his attempt.

<sup>4</sup> He says, in a letter written in February, 1894: "Believe me, I was actuated but with one desire, and that was the happy termination of our troubles, and to have restored to our own prosperous little borough a peace and repose that had formerly

On July 27th the works re-opened under military protection, with about 700 new men at work, a few of them, according to press reports of the time, well educated graduates of technological schools, attracted by the supposedly high wages which they could soon earn. Even fifty or more negroes were employed. Although many could not do the work required, larger and larger numbers made the attempt. By September 19th, all of the 7,000 troops, save one regiment, had been withdrawn. On November 17th and 18th the striking mechanics and laborers returned to work, and on the 20th the Amalgamated Association declared the strike off. The sympathetic strikes in most of the other mills ended at the same time; that at the non-union Duquesne works had collapsed in August. Most, but not all, of the older men were taken back. Several thousand dollars of financial assistance was contributed by individuals and trades unions during the strike. That which did apparently the most effective service was spent in the legal defense of some of the strikers. For this purpose the American Federation of Labor received \$7,043.66, from over 300 unions, but found it necessary to spend only \$3,564.96.

The action of July 6th, and events connected therewith, led to 163 indictments for conspiracy, aggravated riot, treason, and murder, but no convictions followed. Only a few were tried. Bail was accepted in the case of all, save Messrs. O'Donnell, Critchlow, and Clifford. These three, after six months' imprisonment, were acquitted of some of the charges, and released on bail on the others, while countercharges of the men against the Carnegie officials and the Pinkertons were not prosecuted. It is well understood that the charges against the men will not be pressed to trial. While the Grand Jury in October were considering the charges against some of the strikers, Chief Justice Paxson instructed the jury, in a charge which seems to the writer to be more in accord with old English than with American precedents, that the forcible assumption of the functions of blessed its humble homes. Mine has been the sacrifice. Today, in reward for my efforts, I am misunderstood and maligned by the unthinking crowd—a modern Ishmael doomed to wander in the desert of ingratitude."

government by the strikers early in July was treason, because it was a "levying of war against the State."<sup>1</sup>

Early in 1893 two men, somewhat prominent in connection with the strike, were convicted and imprisoned on the charge of causing the death of some of the non-union men by poisoning their food, but no one has maintained that most of the men or of the advisory committee were privy to or endorsers of this awful crime.

Mr. Frick testified that the strike cost the men in wages during its 143 days, about a million dollars, while the loss of the company is not given. It is known, however, that it must have been heavy. The cost to the State, writes the State Treasurer, was \$440,246.31.

The result of the strike upon wages at Homestead since 1892 is hard to determine.<sup>2</sup> The industrial depression would probably

<sup>1</sup> His charge is quoted in *Senate Report*, pp. xvii-xix. A portion is as follows: "A mere mob, collected upon the impulse of the moment, without any definite object beyond the gratification of its sudden passion, does not commit treason, although it destroys property and takes human life. But when a large number of men arm and organize themselves by divisions and companies, appoint officers and engage in a common purpose to defy the law, to resist its officers, and to deprive any portion of their fellow-citizens of the rights to which they are entitled under the constitution and laws, it is a levying of war against the State, and the offense is treason. . . .

"Where a body of men have organized for a treasonable purpose, every step which anyone of them takes, in part execution of their common purpose, is an overt act of treason in levying war. Every member of such usurped government, whether it be an advisory committee, or by whatever name called, who has participated in such usurpation, who has joined in a common purpose of resistance to the law and the denial of the rights of other citizens, has committed treason against the State. While the gravamen of this offense is the design of overturning the government of the State, such intention need not extend to every portion of its territory. It is sufficient if it be to overturn it in a particular locality. And such intent may be inferred from the acts committed."

<sup>2</sup> No word could be obtained from the Carnegie company as to the truth or falsity of the following table of reductions of wages of the skilled labor stated by Mr. O'Donnell to have been made in the 119-inch plate mill since 1892. He claims that no improved machinery has been introduced there in the last two years. The figures relate to rates per ton of 2240 pounds.

|                 | 1889-'92 | Oct., '92 | Feb., '94 |                     | 1889-'92 | Oct., '92 | Feb., '94 |
|-----------------|----------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Roller - - -    | 14 c.    | 12.15c.   | 6 c.      | Hookers - - -       | 8.5 c.   | 6.08c.    | 2.72c.    |
| Screwman - -    | 11.5     | 9.55      | 3.7       | Heater's Helper -   | 7.5      | 4.85      | 2.27      |
| First Shearman  | 13       | 9.85      | 4.09      | First Leader - -    | 7.75     | 5.21      | 2.95      |
| Second Shearman | 8.5      | 6.8       | 3.41      | Second Leader -     | 7.25     | 4.47      | 2.56      |
| Tableman - -    | 10.      | 6.94      | 3.2       | Shearman's Helpers, | 5.50     | 3.47      | 2.27      |
| Heater - - -    | 11.      | 9.55      | 5.25      |                     |          |           |           |

have led to some reductions, though, it is true, strong unions have entirely prevented this in the Chicago building trades, in cigar making, and in many other occupations.

The Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers was so much reduced in numbers and strength, as a result of the Homestead defeat, that it has been obliged to allow many competitors of the Carnegie company to reduce their pay per ton to the Homestead level, although, by reason of poorer machinery, these rates would not give their men the same day wages. This has in turn, according to statements made by officers of the Amalgamated Association, been made the excuse for still further rate cutting by some of the best equipped plants. Yet these troubles do not seem to have greatly affected the wage scale in mills not competing with the Homestead products, such as tin and sheet mills. The yearly scale was amicably adjusted at the beginning of July, 1893, between the trades union and the twenty-three companies in the Iron and Steel Sheet Manufacturers' Association, who, with about as many smaller concerns that follow the wage scale of this Manufacturer's Association, employ 12,000 to 15,000 men.<sup>1</sup> The official statement given out by the secretary at the close of that conference may indicate what a more conciliatory spirit than Mr. Frick's might have done at Homestead in negotiation with this same association in June 1892 :

The scale on sheet and tin mills was signed this morning at 1 o'clock. The scale as arranged is practically the same as that in force last year. A few adjustments have been made that are equally advantageous to both parties. The sessions of this conference have been very pleasant. The disposition on the part of both was clearly that of acting justly. All felt that mutual interests were at stake, and the business-like manner in which the conference was conducted is highly creditable to all concerned. When the scale had been signed, President Garland spoke appropriately of the friendly feelings existing, and was followed by Mr. McMurtry, who complimented the Amalgamated Association committee for the very acceptable manner in which they had conducted their negotiations. A very satisfactory tariff resolution was readily agreed to.

<sup>1</sup> See the *St. Louis Age of Steel*, July 8, 1893.

Whether the thoroughness of the defeat of the union at Homestead will do more to weaken unionism than the costliness of the defeat to the employer will do to deter others from similar contests ; whether the Homestead defeat was a Bull Run or a Waterloo is hard to determine. The cause of organized labor was greatly aided by the occurrence of strikes in a protected industry just before a presidential election fought on tariff lines. This led many Democratic papers to champion the cause of the men against so-called "tariff protected barons," while many Republican papers met the attack on the tariff by throwing the blame on the Carnegie company.<sup>1</sup>

Therefusal of Mr. Frick on July 12th to give the Congressional Committee<sup>2</sup> either the labor cost or the total cost of a ton of steel billets at Homestead, joined to the well-known wealth and large profits of the company, also contributed to the advantage of the men in the political crisis.<sup>3</sup> Subsequent developments show that "Homestead" is a name for labor orators to conjure with, and that the events of 1892 have on the whole heightened the popular interest in the labor movement.

Very decided has been the effect of the stirring scenes of July, 1892, in discouraging the use of private armed forces in labor

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Cleveland was reported as saying in a speech in New York, "Scenes are enacted in the very abiding place of high protection that mock the hopes of toil, and demonstrate the falsity that protection is a boon to toilers."—*House Report*, p. xxix.

<sup>2</sup> *House Report*, p. 29.

<sup>3</sup> The great Democratic majority in the presidential election of 1892 is undoubtedly to be accounted for in part by the popular feeling, greatly increased by the Homestead strike, that our protected industries were unwilling to share with their employees the benefits of the high tariff prices paid by the consumer. It is not the purpose of this article to discuss either the soundness of this reasoning in general or of the illustration drawn from Homestead, but merely to remark upon the efficacy of this reasoning in winning votes for tariff reduction or repeal. The tariff undoubtedly stimulated the development of the steel industry. The American output of steel billets was 91,000 tons of 2,000 pounds each in 1874, and in 1891, 3,637,000 tons. The duty levied under the McKinley tariff is : On billets invoiced at \$20 or less, \$8 per ton, on billets invoiced at from \$20 to \$28, \$10 per ton. The tariff prior to the McKinley bill had been 45 per cent., or from \$9 to \$12.60 on billets invoiced at from \$20 to \$28. On the other articles made at Homestead the McKinley bill likewise made but slight changes, usually in the direction of a reduction of the tariff.

disputes, and encouraging resort to the militia, the regular army, and the courts.<sup>1</sup> The bitterness thus engendered among wage-workers and intensified by the battle of July 6th at Homestead has led to the prohibition by several states of the employment of any armed guards save residents of the states, thus preventing the use of private armies called in from distant cities, and at the same time throwing a greater responsibility for the maintenance of order upon the sheriffs, police, and militia. At the time of the Homestead strike, however, the Carnegie Company, according to subsequent decisions of the courts, had the legal right to bring in Pinkerton Guards, as they did, from Chicago and New York.

The Adjutant General of the United States reports eighty-six instances outside of the South and Colorado in which the militia were called out to preserve order during the twenty-five years preceding 1892,<sup>2</sup> and of these, thirty are plainly designated as due to labor troubles. The causes of some of the others, classed by him as mobs, were doubtless connected with labor disputes. It therefore becomes very important to consider the proper use of the militia at such times. No testimony on this point was taken by Congress, but all the press reports of the time agree that not only did the militia prevent access to the new workers by the strikers during working hours, and at all times protected the former from violence, and the property of the company from injury, but they denied all access to the new men, even to small

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Robert A. Pinkerton testified that in the previous twenty-six years his detective force had furnished men in about 70 strikes, and had been employed against over 125,000 strikers in all parts of the country.—*Senate Report*, pp. 247, 242.

A secret circular of the Pinkertons had been issued offering the use of the force in labor disputes. One paragraph of this circular was as follows: "At this time when there is so much dissatisfaction among the laboring classes, and secret labor societies are organizing throughout the United States, we suggest whether it would not be well for railroad companies and other corporations, as well as individuals who are extensive employers of labor, to keep a close watch for designing men among their own employees, who, in the interest of secret labor societies, are inducing their employees to join these organizations and eventually cause a strike. It is frequently the case that by taking a matter of this kind in hand in time and discovering the ring-leaders and dealing promptly with them serious trouble may be avoided in the future."—*Senate Report*, p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> *Congressional Record*, Jan. 13, 1893, pp. 537-539.



committees of strikers after working hours.<sup>1</sup> Likewise in the strike of railroad employees at Buffalo in September, 1892, the new men ate and slept on the company's land, and the militia kept off even committees of the strikers. Such action of the militia is deeply resented by the labor organizations of America, which claim the right, through small, peaceful committees, to address, after working hours, all who, by taking the places of strikers, would break down the efforts of the unions to gain their point. Often such addresses by committees are very effective, and employers naturally try to prevent them. They insist that, if they board the new men on their land, the militia ought to keep off even a committee of one from the strikers. It may be that at present the employer and land owner has the law on his side, but the public when it understands the issue may yet justify the efforts of the employees to secure a change in this respect.

Massachusetts has devised a substitute for the militia, very satisfactory in most cases, in the state force, known as the District Police. The force is not large but can be readily increased. It is a branch of the State Board of Factory Inspectors, and is thought to be better fitted to deal with labor troubles than either the Pinkertons or the militia.

Another result of the strike was the rise, into somewhat more of prominence than before, of the growing demand of wage-workers for the recognition of a new property right—the right of the employee to employment. This right, whose bold exposition by Senator Palmer,<sup>2</sup> of Illinois, in the United States Senate,

<sup>1</sup> Mr. O'Donnell writes me: "The men did not have access to scabs, as they were housed and fed within the mill inclosure, shanties being erected for that purpose. To the present day, they have a settlement within the historic high fence, consisting of 150 one-story frame dwellings, where the common laborers are still housed, which is known to the community as 'Potterville.' . . . For the most part, the scabs were lodged within the fence for five months. For a change of diet they would at times be escorted by deputy sheriffs to the town proper, and the hotel and the restaurant keepers were compelled to feed them, though against their will. Under the Brooks law in this state, had the saloon keepers refused to furnish them meals they would have forfeited their licenses."

<sup>2</sup> "You cannot admit the absolute right of capital; you cannot admit the absolute right of labor; you have got to adjust their rights upon some basis. What is it?"

July 7, 1892, startled many, is that the old employees of a business shall have the right to be consulted as to wages, and shall have a permanent civil service tenure of employment on good behavior, and if any differences arise which friendly conference or arbitration cannot settle, there shall be merely a cessation of business, without the employment of new men, till some compromise or surrender on one side or the other is reached. Many employers might consent to make contracts guaranteeing permanency of employment and conciliation and arbitration as to all differences and as to renewal of the contracts from time to time, if the men would assume corresponding legal responsibilities by the incorporation of unions and by depositing some valuable forfeit against violations of the contract. Many trades union leaders have expressed to the writer of the present paper their dislike to assuming such legal responsibilities, and believe they can get all the rights needed by such strong organization as was lately shown in the strikes on the Great Northern Railroad, in the Chicago building trades, and in the coal mines at the present time.

In summing up, it may be said that in all the legal questions involved in the use of the Pinkertons and the employment of non-union men, the Carnegie Company kept well within the limits of the law, although as stated above, the laws of many States have since that time been changed so as to leave the maintenance of law and order to the citizens of the State concerned, or, at the discretion of the Governor, to the regular army. The men violated the law in seeking to prevent by force, before July 6th, the employment of non-union men.

The subsequent fall in the price of steel billets and the general depression have made clear, what, of course, could not be foreseen

That the manufacturing establishment is a public institution, as the railroads are held to be public, because they work for the public, public because they employ the public, public because men in their service become unfit for other services, and public because there are thousands dependant upon them for food and nurture. Thus we have recognized the right of the capitalists to the control of his property, subject to his right to a reasonable reward for his investment, and we claim for the laborer the right to permanent employment during good behavior, though he is certainly compelled to submit to the changes of business. Where the profits are small the parties must divide the losses; when the profits are large the profits may be divided."

at the time, that the men directly concerned in the strike made a great mistake in not accepting the Company's terms, albeit organized labor as a body probably has gained by the thrilling scenes at Homestead.

The Carnegie Company, on the other hand, were severely criticized in the Majority Report of the House Committee of Investigation,<sup>1</sup> for lack of that conciliatory spirit toward the men which society has the right to demand of its industrial leaders, before being compelled at great expense to suppress, with the militia, the mutinous spirit thus stimulated, if not created. It appears from Mr. Frick's own testimony that the president of the Amalgamated Association was anxious, on July 7th, to confer with him as to the resumption of work by the men at the reduced wages, and abundant evidence has been quoted to show that the men from that time on, and even earlier, were ready to accept Mr. Frick's terms, yet he refused to treat with them even when asked to do so by Mr. Carnegie.

Ex-President Hayes, in a conversation with the writer, on the subject of this strike and the almost contemporaneous one of the railroad switchmen at Buffalo, in September, 1892, said: "If the State is to be forced to such trouble, she will some time demand the right to take a hand a little earlier in the game;" his meaning being that society would probably insist, in default of voluntary conciliation and arbitration, that the State would compel the reference of the matter to a competent State Board, like the Massachusetts State Board of Conciliation and Arbitra-

<sup>1</sup> *House Report*, p. xi.: "In the negotiations with the committee of Amalgamated workmen for the renewal of the contract, we do not think that the officers of the company exercised that degree of patience, indulgence, and solicitude which they should have done, by way of minute explanation of reasons why the company proposed a reduction in their wages. Mr. Frick . . . seems to have been too stern, brusque, and somewhat autocratic, of which some of the men justly complain. . . . We conclude from all the surroundings that he . . . is opposed to the Amalgamated Association and its methods, and hence had no anxiety to contract with his laborers through that organization. . . . he should have appealed to their reason and shown them the true state of the company's affairs. We are persuaded that, if he had done so, an agreement would have been reached between him and the workmen, and all the trouble which followed would thus have been avoided."

tion, which would have power and duty of trying to bring the parties together, and in the last resort, as in Massachusetts, of compelling testimony on all the material points at issue, and of employing, as assistants, experts acquainted with the business. This power might conceivably extend even to questions of the labor cost, total cost, and profits. (Inquiry into profits is not within the power of the Massachusetts Board.) It does not seem practicable, for the present at least, to make the decision of even such a court mandatory, unless both parties should previously so agree, but the decision of such a court would probably have such power in moulding public opinion as to make both sides ready in many cases to accept its suggestions and awards.<sup>1</sup>

Another lesson taught by the strike is the impossibility of the employees, without a much stronger local and national organization than they had in this instance, securing directly and immediately in wages any large share of the benefits of machinery or of the profits which a tariff may bring, although in the long run the wage-worker, as consumer, may get a part of the gain. In our present organization of society, it requires a strong organization of labor to force wages in any trade or business much above those in competitive enterprises, or in those requiring equal skill, whatever may be the profits of the business. Strong organization has accomplished this in many places—in glass-making, and brick-laying, and several other industries. It is more easily done in the building trades, which possess some features of local monopoly, than in industries competing in a world-market.

A final lesson of the strike is the great injury to the cause of organized labor resulting from anything savoring of anarchy. It is well known that the eight-hour movement was put back several years by the bomb-throwing of the anarchists at the Chicago

<sup>1</sup> "Nine strikes out of ten can be avoided if this spirit of justice and conciliation is manifested. Now, the sooner the employers and employees realize this, the better will it be for all concerned. It is wonderful to see the beneficial effect of conferences. . . . It pays employers of labor to meet their men, discuss these things, and discuss them with patience."—Testimony of W. P. Rend, *Senate Report*, p. ix.

Haymarket in 1886. Similarly the Homestead strikers in many ways lost some of the popular sympathy which previously was theirs by the shooting of Mr. Frick by the anarchist Berkman; while evidence has been presented above showing that the Carnegie Company might possibly have reopened the conference doors, when Berkman, acting wholly without the knowledge or desire of the strikers, shattered all their hopes.

From whatever point of view we approach the question, we must conclude that the dramatic scenes at Homestead have had a wonderfully educational influence in arousing the country to the aims and methods of organized labor, the folly of violence, the need of conciliation and arbitration in labor disputes, and the responsibility of our "captains of industry," upon whose careful piloting so much of our social peace and of advancement under our present industrial system must depend.

EDWARD W. BEMIS.

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